Rev. – [illegible]
Am. Unitarian Assn.

Boston, May 29. 1847.

My dear Sir,

At the close of a busy & fatiguing week of anniversary Meetings – being also on the point of leaving the city (in a few hours) to pass Sunday at Concord, N. H. – I cannot ~~[illegible]~~ do much in the way of letter-writing.

I send you herewith a copy of the "Christian World" of May 22d., containing some notice of the Newyork anniversaries, which I attended this year; also, the World of today (29th.) having notices of the Boston anniversaries of the present week. Our Unitarian meetings have been very tame & spiritless. I have heard the same opinion expressed by many persons. The Am. Unitn. Assocn. consumed all its business time for 2 days, in deciding upon accepting a Charter of Incorporation and in revising its Constitution, &c. At the close of the second day, I introduced three Resolutions, as follows:

Resolved, That we believe Slaveholding to be in direct opposition to the law & will of GOD, entirely incompatible with the precepts and spirit of Christianity, and wholly at variance

With sincere respects, I am Yours, Samuel May with a Christian profession; and therefore

Resolved, That no Slaveholder ought to be elected to any office or agency in this Association.

Resolved, also, That the public Apologist for Slavery is, in our view, involved in the sin of Slaveholding, at least equally with the Slaveholder.

There was no time to discuss them in the Association that day; but about 30 or 40 gentlemen continued together an hour after the Asn. adjourned and spoke on them. The next day, at the adjourned meeting, they were taken up. Rev. E. B. Hall objected to the ambiguous character of certain expressions, viz. "christian profession" - nobody knew just what was meant by it! Again - what constitutes a man an "apologist" for Slavery? Now ~~though~~ it was not at all necessary that these things should be any more accurately defined than, in the Resolutions, they are; and Mr. Hall's objections, as I afterwards found, amounted to nothing; for, being removed, he found some other reason, I did not understand precisely what, for opposing the Resolutions. Yet, I thought I would remove every minor matter, and so I rewrote the Resolutions, and presented them in the following words:

Resolved, That we believe Slaveholding to be in direct opposition to the law & will of God, and entirely incompatible with the precepts & spirit of Christianity; and therefore {Wholly at variance with a Christian profession.

Resolved, That no Slaveholder ought to be elected to any office or agency in this Association.

After a discussion of 2 or 3 hours, in which the Resolutions were sustained by Rev.ds C. Stetson, Theo. Parker, John L. Russell, B. Frost, George W. Briggs, myself, and others, and opposed by Rev. Dr. E. B. Hall, Jason Whitman, and one or two more whom I have forgotten, it was decided to take the question on the Resolutions separately; the first was adopted, there being one vote only in the negative,—that was given by Thos. R. Sullivan, a thorough hater of Antislavery, and of all reforms in Theology. He would have made a consistent Inquisitor General, 2 or 3 centuries ago. — The other ~~[illegible]~~ resolution, on motion of S. C. Phillips Esq. (who said he wouldnt vote against it, and presumed but few would—then, I ask, why not vote for it?) was laid on the table. So the A. U. A. have managed to shirk off the question of Slaveholding Officers, and refused to meet the question whether they would, or would not, have such! In choosing new officers, under the new Constitution (which leaves out all honorary officers, and with them the 15 Vice Presidents) all Slavehol are omitted. Several voted to lay my 2d Resolution on the table, on the ground that, to pass it would be a work of supererogation, as, und the new Constitution, there was no human probability that any slaveholder could be proposed for election. This ground was taken by Mr. Furness of Philadelphia, to the gre surprise of myself & many others. [His heart and hand have been with the Anti Slavery Cause most generously and nobly, for a long time, but he took a strange turn in this matter. I cannot say more, as time presses.

The Anti Slavery Convention has been ~~to~~ attended by crowds, and has done very well. Frederick Douglass was chosen President, but a attack of Scarlet Fever shut him up at home. The leading antislavery friends hope he will not start a paper here; it will draw away support from the Anti Slavery journals now established and will be likely (I fear) to keep up the colore distinction. What he will consent to do, remains to be seen.

I have ~~[illegible]~~ been chosen General Agent of the Massachusetts Anti Slavery Society, and have accepted the office; an by the time this reaches you, shall be abo entering on its duties. More hereafter.

You will continue to receive 2 Liberators and 1 will be sent to Mr. Lawford, (so Mr. R. F. Wallcutt informs me) until farther notice from you. I told Mr. W. this was not what you desired, I was confident; but he thought best not to ma any farther change, at present.

With sincere respect, I am yours Samuel May Jr.

Ms. B.1.6 v.2, p.48